

The "NET" BUSINESS WATCH

APRIL-JUNE 2002

EMPLOYEE THEFT

(PART II)

Our previous issue discussed the occurrence of employee theft; here are some clues that may aid in detecting it: Be aware of an employee's unexplained rise in living standards. An employee's increase in stress at work, exhibited by isolation from coworkers or greater hostility, could indicate a personal crisis. Problems such as a medical disaster, divorce, gambling debts, or alcohol and drug addictions, may cause a feeling of desperation prompting an employee to steal. Pay close attention to an employee who insists on always handling simple clerical tasks themselves as they may be trying to hide something. Also heed any clients complaints or customer grievances regarding over-charges or higher shipping costs that could, in fact, be thefts. Remember, however, that there may be plausible explanations for these indicators that have nothing

to do with thefts.

To avoid employee thefts, start out with good hiring practices. Do a background check before hiring potential employees. Call previous employers to obtain a work history and to verify resume and application information. Make it harder to steal within the business by dividing tasks especially related to money or accounting so that not one person has too much authority. This also allows employees to see what each other are doing. Consider having occasional audits or inventories to keep records up to date. Reconcile all invoices and payments to watch for discrepancies. There are several mechanical means to deter or detect employee theft. These include camera or alarm systems that watch over employees and goods. These types of systems, however, can create a negative climate for

employees. A positive environment, where the employer and employee work together to prevent theft, would be best. Training employees about theft and then creating a reward system for departments that reduce shrinkage, could add to positive morale. Employee assistance programs for workers with personal problems could provide an alternative for them other than stealing.

As a business, develop clear policies that apply to all employees. There should be no acceptable level of loss. Nor should there be a double standard relating to hierarchy within the business or how small the theft. Business owners and managers should take an active approach in setting a good example so they don't foster the idea that it is alright to steal from the company. Owners and managers who are aware of what is happening within their business are the best deterrent to employee theft.

"Where did all the money go?! And find my stapler!"



2001 Statistics For Commercial Burglaries

These statistics should be useful in determining a strategy to deter burglars from making your business a target. There were a total of 470 commercial burglaries during the year in 2001.

The top 10 locations for commercial burglaries are as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Storage Units | 6. Construction sites |
| 2. Retail stores | 7. Restaurants |
| 3. Office spaces | 8. Convenience stores |
| 4. Auto parts stores | 9. Churches |
| 5. Service industries | 10. Elementary schools |

The top 5 means of entry:

1. Pried the door with a tool.
2. Breaking out a window.
3. Breaking door glass.
4. Cutting a padlock.
5. Left unlocked.

CRIME STOPPERS

441-3600

COUNTY ATTORNEY INSUFFICIENT FUND CHECKS

441-7321

ATTORNEY GENERAL CONSUMER FRAUD DIVISION

471-2682

LPD TECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

441-7788

LPD SERVICE DESK

441-7204

LPD NON-EMERGENCY

441-6000

THEFTS FROM AUTOS—*Is your car safe?*

Theft from vehicles is a crime that occurs all across Lincoln regardless of area or time of day. While most of these thefts take place in residential areas there has been an increasing number happening at businesses. A parking lot full of unattended cars provides ample “shopping grounds” for a thief.

Thieves will go for the easiest target. They will be looking for unlocked cars and those that have valuable items easily seen from outside. Breaking out a window is one of the most common ways this crime is committed. If the thief sees something readily accessible inside the car they may do a “smash & grab” - taking the property and then running away. Thieves have also admitted to police that they will look for

suction cup marks on windshields or dangling power cords indicating there may be a radar detector available inside the car.

The easiest way to avoid being a victim is to make sure your car is locked every time you leave it, even if for a short time. Make sure all valuables are out of sight and secured somewhere else. Locking briefcases, gym bags, personal stereos and other loose items inside the trunk is safer than leaving them in the interior of the car.

Business personnel should also be alert as to what is happening in their parking area. If it appears that someone is loitering in the lot and checking through cars it would be appropriate to call the

police at 441-6000 to investigate. If you return to your car and discover it has been broken into leave it as-is and call the police to investigate. At the same time be aware of your surroundings in case the thief is still in the area.

Work toward removing any opportunity a thief might have. Stay aware and stay safe as you are going to and from your car.



Fake Funds— Counterfeit Cash

In the last three months Lincoln has had seven *reported* cases of counterfeit money; the bills involved include \$10s, \$20s, \$50s, and \$100s. They have been passed at convenience stores, bars, and restaurants. In January a search warrant was served in a Lincoln house where several counterfeit bills were recovered. It appears that a modern computer, scanner, and copier equipment was used to manufacture the bills.

There are several security features built into our currency to combat counterfeiting; these include a watermark of the portrait that can be

seen when the bill is held up to the light. There is also a polymer thread embedded vertically in the paper just left of the portrait. This thread can also be seen when the bill is held up to a light and it will have a denomination identifier printed on it— for example: “USA TWENTY USA TWENTY USA...” Genuine currency paper will be cloth-like and have red and blue fibers embedded in it. Counterfeit bills often have red and blue marks printed on the paper but they are not fibers that can be separated from the paper. Watch for ink that has bled or ran and check that micro-printing under the portrait

can still be read. Ink problems and obscured micro-printing could indicate that the bill is a counterfeit.

People who are experienced in handling money can easily spot discrepancies in bills. If a bill looks suspicious please take the time to check for the security features that should be on the bill. You may avoid accepting counterfeit money.

If you know the money is counterfeit, or if you are just not sure, call the police to come and investigate the case.

Reporting: Details, Details, Details...

When police officers are given detailed information they have a better chance to complete a successful investigation. If you call to make a report your first contact will be with an operator/dispatcher answering your non-emergency or 911 phone call. Stay on the phone with the operator and patiently respond to all of their questions. While you are giving them information they will be relaying it to officers who are responding to your location. When the officer arrives and talks to you they may ask some of the same questions the operator already

asked. Understand that the officer needs your statement directly from you to avoid any misunderstanding and to build a viable case.

Information you give should be as detailed as is possible and should include what happened, where it happened, when it happened, and who was involved. Descriptions of people involved should contain everything you know such as names, addresses, and relationship (if there is any). At a minimum, the person's sex, race, approximate height, weight, and clothing description should be provided.

If a vehicle is involved, similar details are needed; the make, model, year, color, and any noticeable damage should be given. If a license plate number can be seen it is excellent information that can be traced.

When an incident involves stolen or damaged property detailed descriptions are again required. Information that is specific to a particular item can only help an officer's investigation.

Detailed facts are the best tools that police and victims have to prove any kind of criminal case.

The Lincoln Police Department is looking for several individuals that have three or more outstanding warrants. Some of these criminals have been "ducking" the law for up to two years. We need your help in bringing all these individuals in to face up to their responsibilities. If you see any of these individuals or have tips on where Law Enforcement might locate them, please call **Crime Stoppers** at **475-3600**.



Anthony J. Labrillo W/M
DOB: 10-28-1976
5ft 11in, 190lbs
Eyes: Brown Hair: Brown
WARRANTS: LPD/LSO
Steal Money or Goods
Hinder/Delay Arrest
Assault
Theft by Deception



Courtney Jarrod Savage B/M
DOB: 01-07-1982
5ft 6in, 150lbs
Eyes: Brown Hair: Black
WARRANTS: LPD/LSO
Steal Money or Goods (x2)
Trespassing
Refuse to Comply w/Police



Mark Sharom Moshiri W/M
DOB: 02-25-1977
5ft 10in, 150lbs
Eyes: Brown Hair: Brown
WARRANTS: LPD/LSO
Disturbing the Peace
DWI
Negligent Driving
Suspended Driving (x2)



INDIVIDUAL(S)
LOCATED AND TAKEN
TO JAIL OR THE
WARRANTS WERE
TAKEN CARE OF.



Calvin James Crocker W/M
DOB: 08-21-1970
5ft 10in, 170lbs
Eyes: Brown Hair: Brown
WARRANTS: LPD/LSO
Disturbing the Peace x 2
Trespassing x 2
Urinating in Public
Consume Alcohol in Public
Possession Drug Paraphernalia
Parks Violation

Last Address:
2410 Vine St #2



Kerisse D. Stubblefield B/F
DOB: 10-15-1979
5ft 7in, 150lbs
Eyes: Brown Hair: Brown
WARRANTS: LPD/LSO
3 separate warrants for Suspended
Driving
Vandalism
Narcotics/Intent To Deliver

Last Address:
706 S. 46 St.



Warrants current as of
3-7-2002.

THE "NET" BUSINESS

**LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT
CRIME PREVENTION GROUP
575 S. 10TH St.
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508**

***Return Service
Requested***

Hazardous Materials

Clandestine laboratories, set up for the production of methamphetamine, have grown to be a serious problem in Lincoln. These labs can be started in a variety of locations including houses, apartments, garages, industrial areas, and even rural areas.

The substances that are used to produce "meth" include several common household products including drain cleaner, starter fluid, paint thinner, and acids are used to mix with phosphorous, lithium, sodium metals, and anhydrous ammonia. When these chemicals are mixed together they create heat and extremely toxic fumes that can explode very easily. The other ingredient used to make "meth" is over-the-counter cold remedies that contain ephedrine or pseudoephedrine.

There are several clues that indicate a "meth" lab may be present. One

indication may be a strong chemical odor that smells like cat urine, ether, ammonia, or acetone. Another may be a quantity of trash that includes antifreeze containers, starter fluid cans and red stained coffee filters. Propane cylinders, like those used for gas grills, that have a brass valve corroded a bright blue color would indicate that they have been used to store anhydrous ammonia.

Frequent short-term traffic, especially at unusual hours could indicate illicit activity. Paranoid or odd behavior, including extensive security could indicate a problem spot. Be aware of places that have the windows darkened, people go outside to smoke, and there are strange chemical odors.

Remember there may be another reasonable explanation for what is occurring. However, when several of these indicators appear it should raise your suspicion. If you believe there may be a "meth" lab stay clear of the area and call the police immediately.

LPD WANTS YOU!

IF YOU ARE AWARE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT WOULD BENEFIT BY JOINING THE **LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT BUSINESS WATCH** PLEASE HAVE THEM CALL US AT 441-8294 OR 441-6515. IN A MATTER OF MINUTES WE CAN GET THE INFORMATION WE NEED TO PUT THEM ON OUR MAILING LIST.

IF YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC TOPIC OR CONCERN RELATED TO BUSINESS WATCH THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ADDRESSED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER FEEL FREE TO GIVE US A CALL AND WE WILL TRY OUR BEST TO RESPOND TO YOUR NEEDS.